July 7, 2014

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte Communication in *In Re Modernizing the E-rate Program for Schools and* *Libraries,* **WC Docket 13-184**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, I hereby provide notice that on July 7, 2014, on behalf of Schoolwires, Inc., I sent by e-mail the attached materials concerning the above-captioned proceeding to: Nicholas Degani, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Pai on wireline matters; Priscilla Argeris, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Rosenworcel for wireline, broadband, universal service, and consumer issues; Rebekah Goodheart, Acting Legal Advisor to Commissioner Clyburn on wireline matters; and Amy Bender, legal advisor to Commissioner O'Rielly for wireline matters.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Respectfully submitted,

 /s/ *Rebeccah Wolfkiel*   _

Rebeccah Wolfkiel
Ridge Policy Group LLC
1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2014

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
450 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As the Federal Communications Commission explores ways to modernize the E-rate Program, we write in support of maintaining web hosting as a Priority One service within the program, which continues to provide substantial benefits to students, parents and school faculty across the country.

School based websites, supported by web hosting services have become dynamic hubs where schools perform critical educational functions. These websites have become the medium school districts utilize for wide spread community engagement, emergency communication, digital learning and parental involvement.

Just as broadband access has provided the infrastructure required to support digital learning, web hosting plays a critical role enabling schools to truly connect to an online educational experience, providing around the clock access to digital learning. Perhaps more than any other service, web hosting helps to further stimulate broadband adoption and deliver a greater educational return on broadband investments. In fact, in a recent survey of more than 200 K – 12 school district administrators, 100 percent indicated that web hosting should remain funded as a Priority One Service within the E-rate program.

Although web hosting nationally only accounts for 1% of total E-rate Program funds, it delivers an impact far beyond actual costs. At just pennies per student per week, web hosting is one of the most cost-effective and highest-impact services funded by E-rate. Due to the very limited nature of school budgets, the elimination of web hosting as a Priority One service within the E-rate Program would create significant financial hardships for school districts because they will need to find additional resources to pay for their non-discounted share of broadband services.

For these many reasons, we believe any effort to alter the way that web hosting is currently treated within the E-rate Program would undermine the intended goals of the program and the FCC's long term broadband goals. Therefore, we respectfully request that moving forward you continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that web hosting remains a Priority One service. We look forward to your timely reply.
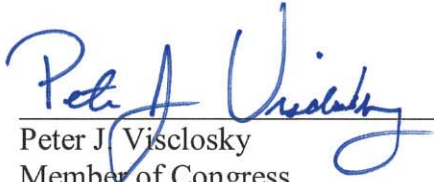
Sincerely,

Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress
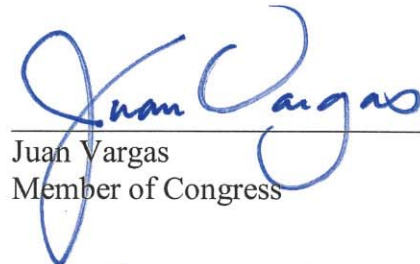
G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

Peter J. Visclosky
Member of Congress

Bill Shuster
Member of Congress

Mike Kelly
Member of Congress

Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress

Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Lou Barletta
Member of Congress

Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress

THE HILL

The Hill: Policy error: Website not found

By Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-Pa.) and Otha Thornton

07/03/14 08:00 AM EDT

As students begin their summer break, parents have reason to be concerned that next school year the primary source of information about their children's schools, teachers and classes may be at risk. Currently, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) is exploring a shortsighted and unnecessary change in the way that local school districts fund their websites.

The FCC is currently working to update the E-Rate program, which was designed to help schools and libraries benefit from affordable 21st century technologies and Internet connectivity. The E-Rate program, which provides financial support for the majority of America's public school websites, is funded through assessments from telecommunications companies, rather than tax dollars, and is operated under FCC-issued guidelines. The program has served as an asset to student success and also the foremost gateway for parents and community members to engage with their schools.

There is growing concern in the K-12 community that the FCC intends to eradicate funding for school websites. Likewise, we believe the program should not come at the expense of adequate funding for online educational and informational tools utilized by teachers, administrators, parents and students. If the FCC pulls the plug on school websites, parental engagement, online learning and even school safety would be put at risk, as emergency communications are primarily addressed through school websites.

According to a recent national survey, school leaders reported that websites are their #1 method for engaging parents, families and community members. Further, 90 percent of educators reported that their school and classroom websites perform essential educational functions. Parents strongly agree, with the majority, ranking school websites as their top choice for driving student achievement and providing direct access to curriculum, teachers and school

information. While there is no single silver bullet to effective family engagement, web communications are a vital component that – when properly utilized – allow parents and families to engage in effective two-way communication and have access to information to support student achievement and advocate effectively for their child.

As hundreds of educational leaders have already noted, accelerating digital learning, parental engagement and the adoption of high-speed broadband Internet connectivity must remain as national priorities. To those of us focused on student success, the policy disconnect is glaring, especially given that website funding accounts for less than 1 percent of the E-Rate program.

In response, the FCC has suggested that schools should simply switch to "free" website services. Unfortunately, so-called free services generate revenue through targeted advertisements and the data mining of private student information, which is sold to the highest bidder. That's a false choice and one that places our kids and their private information at risk. As a result, more than 700 educational leaders, teachers and parents recently have sent comment letters to the FCC urging that E-Rate funding for webhosting continues to serve as a resource for students, parents and teachers.

The FCC is still accepting comments on the E-Rate modernization and members of Congress continue to communicate their concerns over this drastic policy shift. Now is the time for all educators and parents to communicate their views to the FCC and to their Congressional representatives about their continued support for webhosting and adequate funding for the E-Rate program. Please visit http://www.fcc.gov/comments to make sure your voice is heard. Our children deserve as much.

Thompson has represented Pennsylvania's 5th Congressional District since 2009. He sits on the Agriculture; the Education and the Workforce; and the Natural Resources committees. Thornton is president of the National PTA.